



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

OFFICE OF HEALTH CARE ACCESS

M. JODI RELL
GOVERNOR

CRISTINE A. VOGEL
COMMISSIONER

To: All Interested Parties

From: Cristine Vogel, Commissioner, Connecticut Office of Health Care Access

Date: December 15, 2004

Re: Implementation of charges for OHCA discharge abstract and billing data (hospital inpatient hospital discharge database) Freedom of Information (FOI) requests

Effective **January 1, 2005**, the Office of Health Care Access (OHCA) will implement a charge for the programming and formatting of FOI requests for aggregate reports or data from OHCA's discharge abstract and billing database.

Please note the following with respect to charges:

- ❑ Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Section 1-212, OHCA is allowed to charge a fee for any disclosure of computer-stored public records (as defined in Section 1-211, C.G.S.). Beginning **January 1, 2005**, OHCA will charge an amount equal to the hourly salary of any agency employee(s) engaged in programming and formatting the requested report or data. OHCA will also charge for the storage devices or media provided to the person making the request.
- ❑ As specified in OHCA's Budget Review Regulations, Section 19a-167g-94 (g)(8)(C)(ii), such costs may be required to be paid in whole or in part prior to the preparation of the report or data.
- ❑ Charges will be assessed in quarter hour increments of employee time required to program and format the requested report or data.
- ❑ If OHCA is unable to process a request in-house because of lack of staff resources or the complexity of the request, the requester has the option of having the request processed by OHCA's data vendor. Requesters will be notified by OHCA if a request cannot be processed in-house. If a requester wishes to have OHCA's vendor process the request, fees will be charged at a rate determined by the vendor and must be paid in advance.

In addition, please be advised of the following regarding the processing of FOI requests:

An Equal Opportunity Employer

410 Capitol Ave., MS#13HCA, P.O.Box 340308, Hartford, CT 06134-0308

Telephone: (860) 418-7001 Toll-Free: 1-800-797-9688

Fax: (860) 418-7053

- ❑ Upon receipt of a request for information from the OHCA hospital inpatient discharge database, OHCA will publicly notice the request on its website and with the Secretary of State, as specified in OHCA's Budget Review Regulations, Section 19a-167g-94 (g)(8)(D).
- ❑ Requests for aggregate reports or data from OHCA's inpatient discharge database **must** be received by OHCA in writing via email, fax or mail using the attached request form. Per Section 19a-167g-94 (g)(8)(B) of OHCA's Budget Review Regulations, requests for reports or data **must also contain** a list of the data elements being requested, a detailed description of the content and organization of any report and an example of the report's layout showing how the desired organized information is preferred. The request shall also contain a statement by the requestor confirming the request conforms to the confidentiality provisions of the agency regulations.
- ❑ Please see attached pages from OHCA's recently updated website, which further outlines OHCA's process for receiving and responding to Freedom of Information requests.
- ❑ OHCA makes every attempt to provide requested information within a reasonable amount of time. According to FOI law, the agency is required to provide "prompt" access to public records. Promptness is a standard determined by consideration of a number of factors such as: how busy the agency is at the time of the request, how time-consuming it will be to comply with the request and the urgency of need for the information contained in the records.

I encourage you to familiarize yourself with the data on our website, as the information you are seeking may already be available there. In addition, please refer to the website's Freedom of Information Requests Guidelines & Requirements section for additional information regarding the FOI process.



Cristine A. Vogel
Commissioner